

the Balkans will further the region's successful integration into Europe. The European Neighborhood Policy and U.S. support for democratic and economic transitions will contribute further to stability, prosperity and partnership. We will in particular continue to coordinate our efforts to promote democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in Belarus.

We are witnessing a growing desire for reform in the Middle East and welcome recent democratic developments. Democratic elections in the Palestinian territories, Iraq, and Lebanon have successfully taken place. We recognize the importance of transparent and fair elections and the need to expand freedom and opportunity across the region. We reaffirm our commitments made at Dromoland and Sea Island, and our support for the Forum for the Future and other elements of the G-8 BMENA Initiative. Recognizing that the threat of conflict can undermine democratic reforms, we commit ourselves to support those who are working for the resolution of conflicts, in the Middle East and elsewhere.

We have both encouraged the growth of democratic institutions in many countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We acknowledge the important contributions by regional and multilateral organizations, as well as initiatives such as the Community of Democracies, to promote democracy and respect for fundamental human rights.

We recognize that differences in history, culture and society mean that the paths taken towards democracy and the rule of law will be different and that the systems of government that result will be varied, reflecting local traditions and preferences. Democracy, while it is based on universal values, will not be uniform. However, the desire for justice, freedom, human rights, and accountable and representative government is universal. In the long term, only systems responsive to the wishes of the people they govern can achieve political stability.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by the European Union and United States on the Joint Program of Work on the Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction *June 20, 2005*

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems continue to be a preeminent threat to international peace and security. This global challenge needs to be tackled individually and collectively, and requires an effective global response. We are fully committed to support in that respect the important role of the United Nations Security Council and other key UN institutions.

The United States and the European Union are steadfast partners in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and will undertake several new initiatives to strengthen our cooperation

and coordination in this important arena, even as we enhance our ongoing efforts.

Building Global Support for Nonproliferation: The European Union and the United States will enhance information sharing, discuss assessments of proliferation risks, and work together to broaden global support for and participation in nonproliferation endeavors. We will increase transparency about our nonproliferation dialogues with other countries to ensure, to the extent possible consistency in our nonproliferation messages.

We reaffirm our willingness to work together to implement and strengthen key

arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, agreements and commitments that ban the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems. In particular we underline the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. We will increase our effort to promote, individually or, where appropriate, jointly, the universalisation of these Treaties and Conventions and the adherence to the Hague Code of Conduct against the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

Reinforcing the NPT: The EU and the US reaffirm that the NPT is central to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The EU and the US stress the urgency to maintain the authority and the integrity of the Treaty. To that end, the EU and the U.S. recommit to fulfill our obligations under the Treaty while working together in order to strengthen it. We will evaluate lessons learned from the 2005 Review Conference and continue to stress the importance of compliance with and universal adherence to the NPT.

Recognizing the Importance of the Biological Threat: The EU and the US will work together in advance of the upcoming BTWC- Review Conference in 2006, in order to strengthen the Biological Weapons and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Promoting Full Implementation of UNSCR 1540: We will coordinate efforts to assist and enhance the work being done by the UNSCR 1540 Committee, and compliance with the resolution. We will work together to respond, where possible, to assistance requests from States seeking to implement the requirements set by the UNSC Resolution 1540 and in particular, to put in place national legal regulatory, and enforcement measures against proliferation.

Establishing a Dialogue on Compliance and Verification: The European Union and the United States renew their call on all States to comply with their arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agree-

ments and commitments. We will seek to ensure, through regular exchanges, strict implementation of compliance with these agreements and commitments. We will continue to support the multilateral institutions charged with verifying activities under relevant treaties and agreements. We will ask our experts to discuss issues of compliance and verification in order to identify areas of possible cooperation and joint undertaking.

Strengthening the IAEA: The U.S. and the EU welcome the steps taken earlier this month by the Board of Governors of the IAEA that created a new Committee on Safeguards and Verification, which will enhance the IAEA's effectiveness and strengthen its ability to ensure that nations comply with their NPT safeguards obligations. We will work together to ensure all States conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an Additional Protocol with the IAEA. We agree that the Additional Protocol should become a standard for nuclear cooperation and non-proliferation.

Advancing the Proliferation Security Initiative: As we enhance our own capabilities, laws and regulations to improve our readiness for interdiction actions, we pledge to strengthen the Proliferation Security Initiative and encourage PSI countries to support enhanced cooperation against proliferation networks, including tracking and halting financial transactions related to proliferation.

Global Partnership: The U.S. and the EU reaffirm our commitment to the Global Partnership Initiative Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. We will assess ongoing and emerging threats and coordinate our nonproliferation cooperation, including with other participating states, to focus resources on priority concerns and to make the most effective use of our resources.

Enhancing Nuclear Security: We intend to expand and deepen cooperation to enhance the security of nuclear and radiological materials. We welcome the establishment of the Global Threat Reduction